

Message Text

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ACTION MMO-02

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 USIA-06 SIL-01 LAB-04 AID-05

AGR-05 PER-01 SS-15 ABF-01 SY-05 INR-07 SP-02 OC-05

CCO-00 OPR-02 NSC-05 OMB-01 /078 W

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P R 270648Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3924

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 4409

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AEMR, AFSP, KU

SUBJ: RELOCATION OF REGIONAL PERSONNEL - KUWAIT

REF: STATE 249988

1. KUWAIT CAN ACCOMMODATE THE FOUR REGIONAL PERSONNEL DESCRIBED REFTEL, BUT RENTAL AND ASSOCIATED COSTS WILL BE HIGH. EMBASSY COMMENTARY ON SUBSTANTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF PROPOSED TRANSFERS FOLLOWS:

2. TWO REGIONAL TRADE DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS: KUWAIT CAN PROVIDE GENERALLY SATISFACTORY COMMERCIAL AIR AND COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN REGION. MAJOR OPERATIONAL DRAWBACK IS AVERAGE FOUR-MONTH TRANSIT TIME FOR SURFACE SHIPMENT OF SUPPORTING MATERIAL. MAJOR DISADVANTAGE FROM SUBSTANTIVE STANDPOINT IS THAT ONLY FIFTY U.S. COMPANIES REPRESENTED LOCALLY, PRACTICALLY NONE WITH OFFICES WITH REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES. SINCE, AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, ONE MAJOR ROLE OF REGIONAL OFFICE IN BEIRUT WAS TO MAINTAIN DAY-TO-DAY LIAISON ON MAJOR TRADE OPPORTUNITIES IN AREA WITH WIDE RANGE AMERICAN COMPANIES, THIS CAPABILITY WILL BE LOST.

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TEHRAN OR OTHER CAPITAL WITH LARGER AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY

MIGHT OFFER BETTER PROSPECTS.

2. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT, IN PAST, REGIONAL OFFICERS SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME IN ARRANGING U.S. PARTICIPATION IN ANNUAL TRADE FAIRS IN CAIRO AND DAMASCUS. TRANSFER OF ONE OR BOTH POSITIONS TO ABOVE CITIES MIGHT MAKE BETTER SENSE FROM BOTH A FUNCTIONAL STAND-POINT AND IN SAVINGS ON PER DIEM COSTS. QUALITY REPRODUCTION WORK (IN BOTH ARABIC AND ENGLISH) IS DIFFICULT ALTHOUGH NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCOMPLISH LOCALLY. IN SHORT, IF BEIRUT NO LONGER APPEARS VIABLE, KUWAIT COULD REPRESENT LOGICAL, ALTHOUGH IMPERFECT, ALTERNATIVE.

3. REGIONAL LABOR ATTACHE: KUWAIT IS A LOGICAL ALTERNATIVE TO BEIRUT, ALTHOUGH CAIRO, WITH EGYPTIAN LABOR PROBLEMS AND HEAD-QUARTERS ARAB LEAGUE, MIGHT MAKE MORE SENSE. WE WOULD ANTICIPATE NO MAJOR PROBLEMS WITH LOCATION THIS REGIONAL POSITION IN KUWAIT.

4. USIA REGIONAL ARABIC PROGRAMMER: AS WITH REGIONAL LABOR POSITION, OTHER CENTERS MIGHT BE MORE ADVANTAGEOUS BUT NO SERIOUS PROBLEMS ENVISAGED IN RELOCATION THIS POSITION TO KUWAIT.

5. OTHER REGIONAL OFFICES: EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT CONSIDERATION ALSO IS BEING GIVEN TO LOCATING SEVERAL OTHER REGIONAL OFFICERS IN KUWAIT. WITH REIMBURSABLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN KUWAIT EXPANDING AND THE PROSPECT OF SIMILAR PROGRAMS ELSEWHERE IN GULF, THE SUGGESTION HAS BEEN MADE THAT A REGIONAL AID OFFICER BE BASED IN KUWAIT. ALSO, THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE WANTS TO PLACE A REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE HERE AND THERE MAY BE RENEWED PRESSURE TO LOCATE A REGIONAL FINANCIAL ATTACHE HERE AS WELL. THESE POSSIBILITIES SHOULD FIGURE INTO ANY PLANNING FOR THE TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT SHIFT OF REGIONAL PERSONNEL TO KUWAIT FROM BEIRUT.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS: A DECISION TO RELOCATE REGIONAL PERSONNEL FROM BEIRUT TO KUWAIT WILL SERIOUSLY STRAIN ALREADY OVERTAXED FACILITIES. EMBASSY LACKS ADEQUATE OFFICE SPACE, SUFFICIENT SERVICE PERSONNEL, FURNITURE, QUARTERS, VEHICLES, ETC. HOWEVER, IF PLAN APPROVE AND IF GIVEN NECESSARY RESOURCES, WE CAN ABSORB SUGGESTED PERSONNEL WITH A MINIMUM OF CONFUSION. AT LEAST TWO OF UNITS IN STAFF HOUSING BUILDING ON COMPOUND MUST BE CONVERTED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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OFFICE SPACE. ADDITIONAL DRIVERS, GSO AND COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL WILL BE REQUIRED -- AS WELL AS ANOTHER AMERICAN SECRETARY. IF A REQUIREMENT EXISTS FOR SUBSTANTIAL RECEPTION OR DISPLAY AREAS FOR REGIONAL TRADE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, COSTLY MODIFICATIONS TO STAFF HOUSING AREA ON COMPOUND WILL BE REQUIRED. AT LEAST TWO MORE AUTOMOBILES PROBABLY WILL BE REQUIRED.

7. HIGH LOCAL COSTS ALSO SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN PLANNING.

DIFFERENTIAL IN KUWAIT CURRENTLY IS 15 PERCENT AND RENTAL AND COST OF LIVING PAYMENTS ARE AMONG HIGHEST IN AREA. AMERICAN SCHOOL WILL BE HARD PRESSED TO ACCEPT ADDITIONAL CHILDREN IN FACILITY ALREADY CONSIDERED INADEQUATE AND UNDER-STAFFED. FINALLY, SENIOR GRADES OF REGIONAL PERSONNEL COULD CREATE ORGANIZATIONAL AND MORALE PROBLEMS IN CLASS IV EMBASSY, WHERE SECTION CHIEFS ARE SET AT FSO 4 LEVEL AND DCM AT FSO 3 LEVEL.

8. COMMENT: ABOVE MOSTLY ADVERSE COMMENTARY ON PROPOSED RELOCATION REGIONAL PERSONNEL IS NOT INTENDED TO EITHER DISCOURAGE NECESSARY TRANSFERS TO KUWAIT OR TO INDICATE LACK OF WILLINGNESS ON PART THIS EMBASSY TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE. RATHER, THEY ARE DESIGNED TO PRESENT REALISTIC ESTIMATE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUBSTANTIVE PROBLEMS WHICH WILL BE ENCOUNTERED. EMBASSY FULLY PREPARED ACCEPT ANY OR ALL OF POSITIONS WHICH MAY BE NOMINATED. STOLTZFUS

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